

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

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FM AMEMBASSY ATHENS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 6154

INFO AMEMBASSY ANKARA

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AMCONSUL THESSALONIKI UNN

C O N F I D E N T I A L ATHENS 7976

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PLOS, TU, GR

SUBJECT: AEGEAN OIL DISPUTE

REF: A. STATE 239285

B. ATHENS 7233

1. EMBOFF CALLED ON MFA OFFICIAL DIMITRIS MACRIS (SECOND DIRECTORATE, TURKISH AFFAIRS) NOVEMBER 5 TO OBTAIN COPY OF MAP REQUESTED BY REFTEL A. COPIES BEING POUCHED TO BOTH DEPARTMENT AND ANKARA.

2. IN COURSE OF ENSUING CONVERSATION, MACRIS STATED THAT GOG HAD NOT YET ANSWERED TURKISH NOTE OF SEPTEMBER 16 WHICH HAD REJECTED EARLIER GOG PROTEST OF JULY 18 AWARD BY GOT OF ADDITIONAL OIL EXPLORATION LEASES TO TURKISH PETROLEUM COMPANY. MACRIS EXPLAINED THAT "DELAY" DUE TO POLITICAL SITUATION WHICH CURRENTLY OBTAINS BOTH IN TURKEY AND GREECE. HE IMPLIED THAT ONCE THERE ARE "GOVERNMENTS IN BOTH COUNTRIES THAT CAN DEAL EFFECTIVELY" WITH QUESTION OF AEGEAN OIL THE GOG WILL MAKE ITS RESPONSE.

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3. MACRIS SUMMARIZED THE GOG RATIONALE FOR REJECTING THE

GOT OIL EXPLORATION AWARDS OF BOTH NOVEMBER, 1973 AND JULY, 1974, I.E. (A) A UNILATERAL ACT BY ONE NATION CANNOT BE ACCEPTED AS CAPABLE OF EFFECTING A CHANGE IN MATTER INVOLVING INTERESTS OF OTHER NATIONS, (B) NEW LINES OF DEMARCATION WOULD RESULT IN "SEPARATION AND ISOLATION" OF GREEK ISLANDS FROM GREEK MAINLAND AND (C) GREEK ISLANDS WOULD LOSE THEIR LEGITIMATE RIGHTS UNDER 1958 CONTINENTAL SHELF CONVENTION. MACRIS SAID ESSENCE OF GOG'S LEGAL STAND ON ISSUE IS SPELLED OUT IN ITS MAY 24, 1974 NOTE TO GOT.

4. MACRIS ASSERTED THAT GOG HAS ALREADY OFFERED TO NEGOTIATE WITH GOT ON ISSUE OF CONTINENTAL SHELF BOUNDARY LINES BUT ONLY RPT ONLY ON A LEGALLY ACCEPTABLE BASIS. MACRIS ALLEGED THAT GOT HAS CONSISTENTLY REFUSED TO IDENTIFY LEGAL BASIS FOR ITS OWN EXPANDED CLAIMS. WHEN EMBOFF SUGGESTED THAT GOT HAS IN PAST ADVERTED TO "SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES" CLAUSE OF 1958 CONVENTION AS BASIS FOR POSSIBLE NEGOTIATIONS, MACRIS REPLIED THAT INDIVIDUAL ELEMENTS WHICH GOT HAS PUT FORWARD AS CONSTITUTING SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES ARE NOT "FOUNDED IN LAW". AS EXAMPLES HE CITED GOT REFERENCES TO (A) GREATER SIZE OF ANATOLIAN COASTLINE POPULATION AS COMPARED TO OFFSHORE GREEK ISLAND POPULATION, (B) PECULIAR MORPHOLOGY OF SEABED OFF TURKISH COASTLINE (I.E. IT FALLS QUITE SHARPLY TO GREAT DEPTHS), (C) FACT THAT GREEK ISLAND CHAIN SERVES AS BARRIER TO TURKISH ACCESS TO AEGEAN AND (D) VERY LITERAL DEFINITION GIVEN TO TERM "CONTINENTAL SHELF".

5. MACRIS OFFERED OPINION THAT NOVEMBER, 1973 AND JULY, 1974 ACTIONS BY GOT IN GRANTING OIL EXPLORATION LEASES CONSTITUTED "POLITICAL ACTS" AND WERE NOT AT ALL SINCERE LEGITIMATE EXPRESSIONS OF NATIONAL SOVEREIGNTY FLOWING FROM WELL-FOUNDED RULES OF LAW. MACRIS STATED THAT TRIP OF TURKISH RESEARCH SHIP "KANDARLI" IN MAY, 1974 WAS PARTICULARLY OFFENSIVE IN THIS RESPECT. HE INDICATED THAT HE WOULD NOT BE SURPRISED IF GOT SENT ANOTHER SUCH SHIP ON A SIMILAR VOYAGE IN ORDER TO TRANSIT FURTHER REACHES OF LINE DELIMITING NEW JULY 18 CLAIMS.

6. TO EMBOFF'S QUESTION WHETHER GOG INTENDED TAKING ANY OFFICIAL NOTICE OF RECENT REPORTS THAT GOT WILL RECOMMENCE RESEARCH ACTIVITIES IN LATE NOVEMBER, MACRIS REPLIED THAT GOG POSITION WAS ALREADY EMINENTLY CLEAR AND THERE WAS NO PARTICULAR POINT IN CONFIDENTIAL

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REPEATING AGAIN WHAT HAD BEEN SAID SO WELL BEFORE, I.E. IN MAY, 1974 NOTE. HE SAID HE WAS AWARE GOT HAD CONTACTS WITH TWO EUROPEAN COMPANIES (ONE NORWEGIAN AND ONE DANISH) AND ONE AMERICAN COMPANY REGARDING THE "CONTRACTING OUT" OF THE SURVEY. IN THIS REGARD, HE MADE POINT THAT NOT ONLY GOT BUT ALSO "ALL OTHER GOVERNMENTS" KNOW GOG POSITION ON THIS MATTER.

7. IN AN ASIDE, TO FURTHER SUBSTANTIATE THE ALLEGED POLITICAL

NATURE OF THE GOT'S CLAIMS IN THE AEGEAN, MACRIS REFERRED TO AN EXPLORATION CHART PREPARED BY THE FOREIGN SCOUTING COMPANY", A SURVEYING COMPANY BASED IN GENEVA, SWITZERLAND. THIS CHART WHICH IS DATED JULY 1972 DESIGNATED ALL CURRENT AND PROPOSED TURKISH PETROLEUM DRILLING SITES BOTH ON LAND AND OFFSHORE, AND IT SHOWED NO INDICATION OF PROPOSED ACTIVITY IN ANY AREA LATER CLAIMED BY NOVEMBER, 1973 AND JULY, 1974 AWARDS.

8. MACRIS REFERRED ONCE MORE TO POINT HE HAD MADE IN EARLIER CONVERSATION (REFTEL B, PARA 2) I.E. THAT NEWLY EXPANDED CLAIMS TO SUB-SURFACE OF AEGEAN CORRESPOND IN CLOSE AND PARALLEL FASHION WITH EXPANDED AIR CLAIMS OVER AEGEAN MADE THROUGH TURKISH NOTAM NO. 714 ISSUED AUGUST 6, 1974.

9. ON MAP SHOWING TURKISH EXPANDED SUB-SURFACE CLAIMS, MACRIS DREW EMBOFF'S SPECIAL NOTICE TO SITUATION OBTAINING IN AREA SOUTHEAST OF RHODES WHERE A LARGE RECTANGULAR "BLOCK" WAS AWARDED BY TURKISH PETROLEUM COMPANY BY GOT JULY 18, 1974 DECREE. MACRIS TOLD EMBOFF THAT THIS AREA MIGHT EVENTUALLY POSE SPECIAL PROBLEMS TO GOT IN THAT GOG OF CURRENT OPINION THAT SEA DEPTH IN AREA IS GREATER THAN 200 METERS AND PROBABLY TOO DEEP FOR EXPLOITATION THROUGH CURRENT TECHNOLOGICAL METHODS. IF THIS IS CASE, HE FEELS THAT NEW CONTROVERSY MIGHT BE GENERATED ON BASIS OF "ECONOMIC ZONE" CONCEPT (A LOS CONCERN) INVOLVING NOT ONLY GREECE AND TURKEY BUT ALSO UAR.

10. AS IN PREVIOUS CONVERSATION (REFTEL B) MACRIS GAVE NO INDICATION THAT MATTER CONSIDERED AS ONE OF "EXTREME URGENCY". HOWEVER, HE OBVIOUSLY INTENDED TO CONVEY IMPRESSION THAT GOG BELIEVES ITS CASE IS STRONGLY SUBSTANTIATED IN LAW AND THAT GOT FOR ITS PART OPERATING FROM BASE OF "POWER POLITICS" AND NOT INTERNATIONALLY ACCEPTED LAW OR CUSTOM.

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